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**PERSONAL FACTORS OF CAREER ORIENTATIONS OF  
HUMANITARIAN STUDENTS**

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**Abstract**

Career is the most important component of a person's life path. Building a productive career in a personal and social aspect requires an understanding of what factors are necessary for it and how they influence career choices. Professional training of specialists in the humanities is focused on the values of such personal characteristics as meaningfulness of life, positive self-attitude, and psychological well-being. The problem of the relationship of these personal characteristics with career orientations of humanitarian students is examined in this article. It was revealed that the most significant for the respondents is the orientation towards the stability of work place, followed by personality-centered orientations towards the integration of lifestyles, autonomy and service, then orientations that imply social activity and risk-taking: towards entrepreneurship, management and challenge. According to the results of the correlation analysis, the significance of personality-oriented and socially active career orientations is directly related to the meaningfulness of life. Specification of the severity of which career orientation is facilitated with a greater meaningfulness of life depends on the characteristics of self-attitude, and in the case of an orientation toward autonomy, and the psychological well-being of the individual. The expression of self-interest in self-attitude is of particular interest in light of the problem of the formation of personal characteristics that contribute to the productive career self-determination of humanitarian students. The level of its development is positively related to the severity of orientations towards professional competence and service in future specialists.

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*Keywords:* Career orientations, students, meaningfulness of life, self-attitude, psychological well-being



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## **1. Introduction**

Nowadays the world of work and attitude towards it are undergoing dramatic changes. On the one hand, this creates new opportunities; on the other hand, it puts forward new requirements for the career self-determination of young people and institutions that provide vocational training. It is assumed that training should be aimed not only at the formation of professional knowledge and skills, but also at strengthening or even the formation of personal characteristics that affect the productivity of life. For humanitarian specialties of vocational training at a university, this task is akin to the character of a certain methodological intrigue, since modern humanitarian thought is focused on certain personal characteristics that have become self-valuable benchmarks. But, unfortunately, little is known how these characteristics determine professional and career self-determination. The present research is aimed at identifying the connection between the career orientations of humanitarian students with the meaningfulness of life, self-attitude and psychological well-being of the individual.

## **2. Problem Statement**

At the present time the concept of a career is not limited to the characteristics of vertical movements in the organizational hierarchy and has ceased to be a common noun in this regard (Vasilevskaya, 2018). Career in the modern sense is an individual trajectory of the work path, the nature of which is determined by the interaction of many subjects and factors, if possible regulated both by the individual himself and by social institutions interested in the optimal implementation of the human resource. The core meanings, respectively, are dynamics, interaction and awareness. Awareness should be based on reflection on the needs and preferences of people and on an understanding of the factors that determine them.

On the question of which motivational guidelines are important in career self-determination, one of the most productive developments is the concept of “career anchors” by Edgar Schein. Career anchors are a specialized form of social attitudes that sets key benchmarks for motivating professional activities and evaluating the subject of their professional development (Rodrigues et al., 2013; Schein, 2005; Schein & Van Maanene, 2016). The individual composition of career anchors forms the desired image of the employee’s career, with which he correlates reality (Schein & Van Maanene, 2016). Structuring professional activity, this image becomes its “route map”, an incentive, but at the same time, a limitation in building career trajectories (Volkova & Chiker, 2018). The measure of the coincidence of the opportunities provided by the organization and these important benchmarks for employees affects job satisfaction and even its efficiency (Ona, 2015; Schein & Van Maanene, 2016).

For the Russian labor market and its future specialists, this gives rise to urgent and promising problems. Thus, the research has revealed that Russian students less often than American students include hopes and fears in the field of the future in their meaningful images of the future, less believe in the possibility of realizing their hopes in the professional field (Vasilevskaya, 2018); the level of anxiety and depression among the representatives of the Russian student community (Kholmogorova et al., 2019), as the indicators of perfectionism, especially socially prescribed, are growing; the indicators of the perfectionist cognitive style (thinking about their own imperfections focused on mistakes, a tendency to

unproductive ruminations) have doubled over the past 10 years (Kholmogorova et al., 2019; Van der Stel, 2018).

The content of young students' perfectionist motivators is largely determined by the criteria of the "correct structure" of the personality developed in psychology and simplified due to widespread popularization. Certain personality characteristics have acquired the status of social desirability. This is especially true for humanitarian students. The content of key programs in liberal arts education focuses on the values of these personality characteristics. The categories of meaningfulness of life, positive self-attitude, and psychological well-being are considered as ideal models. But how these characteristics are refracted in relation to professional activity in modern society little is known. At the same time, such information is necessary to improve the quality of career counseling and teaching the psychological foundations of professional activity.

### **3. Research Questions**

In light of the above, the study addressed the following issues:

- What is the hierarchical ratio of the importance of different career orientations (career anchors) among humanitarian students?
- How is the significance of different career orientations related to the life-meaning orientations of humanitarian students?
- How is the importance of career orientations of students related to the characteristics of their self-attitude?
- How is the importance of career orientations of students related to indicators of their psychological well-being?

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

Purpose of the study is to identify and characterize the role of life-meaning orientations, self-attitude and psychological well-being as factors influencing the career orientations of students of humanitarian specialties.

### **5. Research Methods**

The methodological support of the study was as follows:

#### **5.1. The questionnaire "Anchors of a career" by E. Shein adapted by V.A. Chiker**

The questionnaire includes the following scales: "Professional competence" (aspirations: for professional skills); "Management" (to interact, coordinate and manage the actions of others, taking responsibility for the end result); "Autonomy" (to independence and self-dependence, a regime of professional activity free from organizational frameworks); "Stability of the place of work" (to work in a reliable, reputable organization with a long-term contract); "Stability of the place of residence" (to

guaranteed geographic and household stability); “Service” (to utility, the ability to “improve the world” based on moral values); “Challenge” (to competition, overcoming obstacles); “Entrepreneurship” (to create your own income-generating business, willingly to take risks for this); “Integration of lifestyles” (towards a harmonious balance of the main spheres of life) (Chiker, 2004).

### **5.2. Test of meaningful life orientations (MLO) by D.A. Leontyev**

An adapted version of Purpose-in-Life Test, PIL, which includes the scales: “Goals in life” (the presence of meaningfulness, focus and time perspective of goals in the future); “The process of life” (how much the process of life is perceived as interesting, emotionally rich and full of meaning); “The effectiveness of life” (satisfaction with self-realization, assessment of the productivity and meaningfulness of the past period of life); “Locus of control – I” (the idea of oneself as a strong personality with sufficient freedom of choice to build his life in accordance with his goals and objectives and ideas about its meaning); “The locus of control - life” (feeling of controllability of life) (Leontiev, 2000).

### **5.3. Questionnaire of self-attitude by V.V. Stolin, S.R. Pantileev**

The questionnaire reveals the characteristics of self-attitude at three levels of generalization: 1) global self-attitude: scale S (integral feeling “for” or “against” one’s own “I”); 2) self-attitude, differentiated according to four scales: I - self-esteem (belief in one’s own strengths, abilities, energy, independence, assessment of one’s ability to control one’s own life and be self-consistent, self-understanding); II - autosympathy (friendliness-hostility to one’s own “I”); III - expected attitude from others; IV - self-interest (interest in one’s own thoughts and feelings, confidence in one’s interest for others); 3) characteristics of specific actions (readiness for them) in relation to one’s “I”: self-confidence; the attitude of others; self-acceptance; self-guidance; self-consistency; self-accusation; self-interest; self-understanding (Stolin & Pantileev, 1988).

### **5.4. Methods for researching the psychological well-being of a person by T. D. Shevelenkova, P.P. Fesenko**

An adapted version of Riffs Psychological Weil-Being Scale questionnaire with the Self-acceptance scales (positive attitude towards oneself, recognition and acceptance of all one’s own personal diversity, a positive assessment of one’s past); “Positive relationships with others” (close, pleasant, trusting relationships with others, showing concern for others, the ability to empathy, the ability to find compromises); “Autonomy” (independence, the ability to resist social pressure in thoughts and actions, the ability to regulate one’s own behavior and evaluate oneself based on one’s own standards); “Environmental management” (a sense of confidence and competence in managing daily affairs, the ability to effectively use various life circumstances, to choose and create conditions that satisfy personal needs and values); “Purpose in life” (the presence of life goals, beliefs that give meaning to life); “Personal growth” (a sense of continuous self-development, awareness of one’s own personal growth, realization of one’s potential) (Shevelenkova & Fesenko, 2005).

To process the data, descriptive statistics (determination of mean values) and correlation analysis (Spearman's coefficient) were used. The respondents were senior students of Institute of Social Engineering of Reshetnev Siberian State University of Science and Technology (N = 76).

## 6. Findings

The indicators of the importance of career anchors in the mean values for the sample determined the following hierarchy: 1. job stability - 7.5 points; 2. integration of lifestyles - 7.2 points; 3. autonomy - 7.04 points; 4. service - 7.04 points; 5. entrepreneurship - 6.3 points; 6. management - 6.18 points; 7. challenge - 5.58 points; 8. professional competence - 4.7 points; 9. stability of the place of residence - 4.2 points.

As you can see, the anchor indicator "Stability of work" has the highest average value, and the anchor indicator "Stability of residence" has the lowest average value. The second place after job stability is occupied by the average value of the anchor indicator "Integration of lifestyles", followed by "Autonomy" and "Service". Such career orientations as "Entrepreneurship", "Management" and "Challenge" that presuppose high social activity, are, on average, somewhat less pronounced. Unfortunately, the low average value of the indicator of orientation towards professional competence, which occupies the penultimate place in the hierarchy of significance, can be stated. A similar trend is observed in other studies conducted on different samples (Volkova & Chiker, 2018).

Table 1 presents data on significant correlations between career orientation indicators and indicators of respondents' personal characteristics.

**Table 1.** Relationship between career anchor indicators and personal characteristics

Methods	Indicators of personal characteristics	Career anchors								
		Professional competence	Management	Autonomy	Stability of work	work Stability of place of residence	Service	Challenge	Entrepreneurship	Integration of lifestyles
MLO	Goals in life	-	0.27	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.35
	Life process	-	-	0.30	-	-	0.30	-	-	-
	Life result	-	0.23	-	-	-	-	0.26	-	0.25
	Locus of control - I	-	0.29	0.27	-	-	0.31	0.31	-	0.39
	Locus of control - life	-	-	0.22	-	-	-	-	0.22	0.22
	Meaningfulness of life	-	0.26	0.27	-	-	0.25	0.23	-	0.29
Self-attitude	(I) Self-esteem	-	-	-	-0.24	-	-	-	-	-
	(II) Autosympathy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	(III) Expected ratio of others	-	-	0.26	-	-	-	-	-	-
	(IV) Self-interest	0.24	-	-	0.28	-	0.24	-	-	-
	Overconfidence	-	0.28	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Attitude of others	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Self-acceptance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

	Self-guidance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Self-blame	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.21
	Self-interest	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Self-understanding	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	S	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.22	-
Psychological well-being	Positive attitude	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Autonomy	-	-	0.27	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Environment control	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Personal growth	-	-	0.23	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Goals in life	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Self-acceptance	-	-	0.25	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Well-being index	-	-	0.26	-	-	-	-	-	-

*Note.* Significance levels of correlations: from 0.22 - 95%, from 0.28 - 99%.

Least of all, the career orientations of the respondents were associated with their psychological well-being. The anchor indicator “Challenge” is inversely related to the level of positive attitude towards others. This means that some dissatisfaction with relationships, their low confidence stimulate the motivation to overcome and compete in professional activities. The other four significant links between the indicators of psychological well-being are with the career anchor indicator “Autonomy” (striving for freedom from organizational rules, prescriptions and restrictions, the implementation of one’s own standards of action). The expression of this career orientation is facilitated by an increase in the level of components of psychological well-being related to “I-positivity”: acceptance of one’s individuality, striving for self-realization and self-development, independence from external pressure and assessments. The revealed trend is consistent with the data of previous studies, according to which the readiness for self-realization and a high level of aspirations, characteristic of high levels of psychological well-being, come into frustrating contradiction with the conditions and requirements of social life (Lukyanchenko, 2016; Pavlotskaya, 2015).

Among career anchors, only the anchor “Stability of the place of residence” is not associated with personal characteristics. The anchor indicator “Professional competence” is also not rich in links with indicators of personal characteristics. Its significance is positively correlated with the severity of self-interest in the self-attitude of the individual.

The focus on the stability of the place of work is associated only with the characteristics of self-attitude: positively with self-interest and, in the opposite way, with self-esteem.

The importance of the career anchors “Stability of the place of work”, “Stability of the place of residence” and “Professional competence” turned out to be unrelated to the indicators of meaningfulness of life.

Indicators of the importance of all other career anchors are associated with indicators of life-meaning orientations by multiple direct connections. This suggests that the richness of meaning in the key aspects of life contributes to the greater design and effectiveness of career guidelines. According to the data in Table 1, the decision of which of the career anchors will receive greater weight for the subject depends on the characteristics of self-attitude, and for the anchors “Autonomy” and “Challenge”, it also depends on psychological well-being. This provision can be concretized by the following symbolic formulas:

- Meaningfulness of life + psychological well-being = orientation towards autonomy.
- Meaningfulness in life + self-confidence = management orientation.

- Meaningfulness of life in the aspect of the internal locus of control-life + positive self-attitude = orientation towards entrepreneurship.
- Meaningfulness of life + lack of positive relationships = orientation to the challenge (competition).
- Meaningfulness of life + inclination to self-blame = orientation towards integration of lifestyles.
- Meaningfulness in life + self-interest and positive expectations from others = service orientation.

## 7. Conclusion

Currently, a career is considered as a trajectory of the work path, which is influenced by many factors of both inter- and intrapsychic nature. Understanding the role of these factors provides the basis for a meaningful construction of career strategies and the productive implementation of human resources in the labor sphere. Teaching humanitarian students in the value aspect is focused on such personal characteristics as meaningfulness of life, positive self-attitude, and psychological well-being. But the question of how these characteristics affect the career guidelines of modern young people has not yet been raised.

In a study conducted on a sample of senior students of the humanitarian profile of vocational training, it was revealed what significance different “career anchors” (key career orientations) have for them and how this significance is related to personal characteristics.

The most significant was the focus on job stability. Career orientations that are person-centered in nature have high scores, but they are somewhat less significant: for the integration of lifestyles, autonomy and service. Career orientations that involve social activity and risk-taking: towards entrepreneurship, management, and challenge have an average level of significance. Professional competence and stability of residence are of low importance for students.

The results of the correlation analysis indicate that the importance of personality-oriented and socially active career orientations is directly related to the meaningfulness of life. Specification of the severity of which career orientation is facilitated with greater meaningfulness of life depends on the characteristics of self-attitude, and for the orientation towards autonomy, the psychological well-being of the individual is also an important factor.

The combination of high importance of job stability and autonomy (freedom from organizational framework) revealed in humanitarian students in light of employment prospects can become a difficult contradiction and a source of difficulties in building personality-satisfying career strategies. If we add to this the connection between the severity of orientation toward autonomy and the meaningfulness of life and psychological well-being, revealed in the study, then we can talk about the risk of rather acute forms of manifestation of this contradiction.

In light of the problem of the formation of personal characteristics in the learning process that contribute to productive career self-determination, such a characteristic of self-attitude as self-interest is of particular importance. The level of its development is positively related to the severity of orientations towards professional competence and service in future specialists.

The research results can be useful for understanding the prospects, opportunities and risks of career self-determination of graduates of humanitarian specialties and for the development of psychological and pedagogical technologies for its optimization.

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